Message Text

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SUBJECT: EC FOREIGN MINISTERS COUNCIL MARCH 3-4: HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FIRST DAY

REFS: A) EC BRUSSELS 1096

B) EC BRUSSELS 1553

C) EC BRUSSELS 8129 (1974)

D) EC BRUSSELS 1713

1. SUMMARY: THE EC COUNCIL OF FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING IN BRUSSELS MARCH 3 DISCUSSED THE ISSUANCE BY THE FRENCH OF INVITATIONS TO THE PRODUCER/CONSUMER PREPCON (REPORTED SEPTEL, UK RENEGOTIATION (SEPTEL, COMMUNITY PREPARATIONS FOR UNIDO II, THE EC'S GENERALIZED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES, THE OPENING OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH MEXICO LEADING TO A NON-PREFERENTIAL COMMERCIAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT AND THE EC'S MEDITERRANEAN POLICY.

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2. GENERALIZED SYSTEM OF PREFERENCES (GSP): THE

COUNCIL ADOPTED A DECLARATION REGARDING THE COMMUNITY'S GSP, ENDORSING THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS FOR GRADUAL IMPROVEMENT AND INDICATING THAT THE SYSTEM SHOULD BE EXTENDED BEYOND 1980 (SEE REF B FOR ADDITIONAL BACK-GROUND). EC COMMISSION VICE PRESIDENT SIR CHRISTTOPHER SOAMES, SPEAKING TO THE PRESS FOLLOWING THE COUNCIL SESSION, SAID GREATER EMPHASIS WOULD BE PLACED ON AID TO THE POOREST COUNTRIES, AS DEFINED BY UNCTAD. HE SAID EFFORTS WOULD BE MADE TO IMPROVE AND SIMPLIFY THE CURRENT GSP REQUIREMENT SO AS TO PROMITE EXPORTS FROM LDC'S OF PRODUCTS WHICH COULD ENTER THE COMMUNITY UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE SCHEME. SOAMES FURTHER INDICATEDTHAT ONE OF THE COMMUNITY'S GOALS IN THE MTN WOULD BE TO SEEK ADDITIONAL BENEFITS FOR LDC'S.

3.UNIDO: THERE WAS A BRIEF DISCUSSION IN THE COUNCIL OF THE FORTHCOMING UNIDO CONFERENCE IN LIMA. (REFTEL B). ALL MEMBER STATES AGREED THAT THE EMPHASIS SHOULD BE ON CONSULTATION OTHER THAN CONFRONTATION BUT THAT THERE WERE A NUMBER OF PROBLEMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE TEXT OF THE GROUP OF 77. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE DEBATE WAS NOT SPECIFIC.—THERE WAS A GENERAL CONSENSUS ON THE DESIRABILITY OF WORKING OUT A COMMON EC POSITION COUPLED WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THIS COULD BE BEST EFFECTED AT THE CONFERENCE. DISCUSSION FOCUSED ON THE QUESTION OF QUANTATIVE AIMS FOR LDC INDUSTRIALIZATION BY THE YEAR 2000, THE QUESTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL DIVISION OF LABOR, THE FORMATION OF PRODUCERS' CARTELS AND THE CREATION OF NEW FUNDS FOR DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE.

- 4. MEXICO: THE COUNCIL APPROVED A COMMISSION MANDATE TO BEGIN NEGOTIATIONS WITH MEXICO ON A NON-PREFERENTIAL COMMERCIAL COOPERATION AGREEMENT ALONG THE LINES OF THE INDIAN MODEL. THIS PROPOSED AGREEMENT WOULD CONTAIN AN MFN TRADE REGIME, INDUSTRIAL AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION ELEMENTS, AND A JOINT COMMITTEE TO OVERSEE AND PROMOTE ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL RELATIONS (REF C).
- 5. MEDITERRANEAN POLICIES: MEETING IN RESTRICTED LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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SESSION, THE MINISTERS HEARD A COMMISSION STATEMENT ON THE TIMING OF CURRENT AND PLANNED NEGOTIATIONS UNDER THE "GLOBAL" MEDITERRANEAN POLICY. THEY DISCUSSED (A) THE CONCEPT OF PARALLELISM BETWEEN NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE MAGHREB, AND WITH THE "MASHRAQ" GROUP (LEBANON, SYRIA, EGYPT AND JORDAN) AND (B) THE LACK OF PROGRESS ON NEGOTIATIONS WITH SPAIN AND MALTA.

IT WAS DECIDED TO REVIEW THE ENTIRE MEDITERRANEAN FILE
IN MORE DETAIL WHEN THE FOREIGN MINISTERS HOLD THEIR NEXT
COUNCIL IN LUXEMBOURG ON APRIL 14-15 (REFTEL D., GREENWALD

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